NUMB. LXVI.

THE PLAIN DEALER.

Credula res amor est ——— OVID MET.
——— *Tormentis gaudet Amantis.* JUV.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6. 1724.

THE Complaint of *AMANDA*, in the following *LETTER*, is of a Nature as New, as the Foundation of it is Juſt. The Guilt which it ſpeaks of, is frequent enough: But this fine-ſpirited, and diſcerning Lady, has placed it on the Perſon, who has, hitherto, been look'd on as moſt Innocent, and deſerving Pity.—The Truth is, there are a thouſand Reſemblances of *Virtue*, which if unmaſq'd, by ſo diſtinguiſhing a Hand as *AMANDA*'s, wou'd aſſume their proper Faces, and be known for *Vices*, and *Follies*.—I will entertain my Readers, with this Ladies Excellent *LETTER*, juſt as I receiv'd it, and afterward, in Obedience to her Command, conſider the Complaint, which is the *SUBJECT* of it.

SIR, *Oct.* 17, 1724.

'WHEN Parents have ſo much Zeal for their Children's *Promotion*, and ſo little for their *Happineſs*, as to force them to *Marry* the Perſon they have an *Averſion* to, How is the World mov'd, with a Tenderneſs of Concern! And Nature ſhock'd with the Violence!

'SUCH a Conſtraint has always met with its juſt Diſcouragement: And your *Predeceſſor in* PLAIN DEALING took it under his Care. But, Whether it is from the *Pride* of *One* Sex, who are fond of the *Reputation*, even, of a Lover whom they *Hate*! Or, from the unjuſt *Partiality*, of the *Other*, The much greater Offender, in my Opinion, paſſes uncenſured.—Such *Parents* are ſtigmatiz'd with *Inhumanity*, and well they may!—But what ſhall we ſay of *Him*, who continues to *teize* the Woman, who *abhors* him? who wou'd force her to make a *Proſtitute* of her *Love*? To enſlave herſelf to Intereſt? And, when her Refuſal has drawn down the Reſentment of her Parents, lays it, all, on his *Exceſs of Love*?

'IS Love then ſo *baſe* a Paſſion? So void of Tenderneſs? So unlike itſelf, and all its generous Pretences? that it can feed on the *Quiet* of the beloved Object! and *ſteal from it* the Joy, which it has not Power to *give it*! No, no, The real Lover knows not how to *Offend*.—His Happineſs muſt riſe, and fall, with *Hers*, who inſpir'd his Paſſion.—But if, on the contrary, His Deſires run *Counter* to her Happineſs, It is not *Love*; It is *Brutality*! And, if He, who is thus *poſſeſs*'d, ſuppoſes Himſelf in Love, He is deceiv'd, and wou'd deceive Others.

'BUT, even granting, All This were the real Effect of Love, on the Part of the Purſuer, where can a *Woman* find That delightful Harmony, That inexhauſtible Spring of Bliſs, which we are taught to expect, in *Loving*? Can the Conſtancy of an unlov'd Lover ever win her to a Compliance? No—rather, *Prepoſſeſſion* will guard the Paſſes of her Heart, nor ſuffer it to be brib'd by Obligations; And *Time* does but add to our Hatred: For Opportunity finds out Faults, and furniſhes *Reaſons* for our Refuſal.—In ſhort, ſuch a Lover ſhows more *Extravagance*, than *Conſtancy*; more *Inhumanity*, than *Paſſion*.

'THIS, Sir, is *my own* Misfortune, to be miſerably haunted, by the Man, whoſe Sight is Odious to me: One, whom no Words can convince! No Denials ſatisfie! No Affronts affect! Inſenſible of my Uneaſineſs; and Indefatigable, in creating it!—I wou'd fly him, but I cannot, unleſs I wou'd fly my Friends too, and my Parents: Nor have I any *Intimate* left, whom his Diligence, and Inſinuations. have not made his Own.

'TIS of YOU, therefore, I muſt beg, to ſay ſomething, that may give me Eaſe, and have ſome Effect on my troubleſome Purſuer: And, if, in any Thing I have ſaid, I am Miſtaken, in my Sentiments, or unguarded, in my Expreſſions, be pleas'd to Correct it; and think, That a Woman can't be always on her Guard, who has ſo juſt a Cauſe for Reſentment, as,

Your Unfortunate,
Humble Servant,
AMANDA.

IF the Admiration, which is due to ſuch a Merit as this Lady's, did not place her above Pity, I cou'd be ſorry for that Perſecution, which ſhe Laments, in ſo *Elegant*, and ſo *Pathetic*, a Manner. The Gentleman, who is ſo unhappy as to be the Subject of her Complaint, will be the laſt, that feels the Force of it.—There is a *Love of ourſelves*, deeply rooted in human Nature, that impoſes on us, firſt, and, then, emboldens us to impoſe on Others. We do not *approve* the Faults, which we are guilty of; But, which is almoſt as bad, we *cannot ſee* them:—We join

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join heartily in, with thoſe, who condemn the very Follies which are moſt remarkably *our own* ; and are all the while inſenſible how ridiculous we appear to Others, by adhering publickly to the *Practice* of what we, as publickly, continue to *Cenſure*.

IT is, I muſt confeſs, the hardeſt Leſſon of Nature, to correct the Extravagances of *Love*. — Where this Paſſion is Real, It will be the *Sovereign* of the Mind. It moulds the Soul to its own Purpoſes ; and lends its own Eyes to the Underſtanding. Neither does it depend, for its Violence, or Moderation, on the Capacity of the Lover, but on the Proportion, in which it actuates him. The Wiſe Man, in this Caſe, has no Prerogative, above the Fool. It is in *Love*, as it is in *Madneſs*, The more Exalted the *Genius*, the more unbounded the *Raging*! — A Wiſe Man may much better *defend* himſelf, than a Fool can ; But, when He *yields*, there is no Difference; becauſe *Opinion*, in this Paſſion, always ſtands in the Place of *Reaſon*.

THIS being the Caſe, *AMANDA* has ſmall Encouragement ; who, by appealing to what is *Reaſonable*, would diſſwade her Lover from what is *Neceſſary*. — Her Charms have deprived his Life of every Comfort, but what *She* gives it ; and, while He loves, at the Rate ſhe ſays he does, it will be impoſſible for him, to *think* himſelf ſo much in the Wrong, as ſhe finds him.

IT would, certainly, be a Great Happineſs, if Men, who love, without Hope, could deſiſt, without Miſery : For, beſides that *AMANDA*'s Argument has thrown an Air of ungenerous Selfiſhneſs, on the *Obſtinacy* of ſuch Addreſſes, there is This further Miſchief in it, That a Lover, whom an avowed *Hatred* cannot repulſe, in his Application, cuts off his Right, when he becomes a *Husband*, to complain of, or return, *Ill Uſage*, — Is ſhe too Cold, too Unkind, too Diſdainful, for a *Wife* ? — How much greater is His Fault, who *foreſaw* all This, and, yet, would *make her one* ? — He *loved* her, before ſhe *pitied* him, and conſented to become *His*, notwithſtanding the moſt open *Profeſſion* of her Inſenſibility ! And how Baſe, and Ungenerous muſt it be, To make the *Continuance* of that Inſenſibility his Pretence for treating her Ill, after ſhe has put her ſelf under his Protection ; which, while ſhe refus'd, and deteſted him, had no Power to move his Reſentment!

EITHER, He ought, with a manly Fortitude, to *tear* himſelf from the Remembrance of an Object, ſo inſenſible of his Torments ; or, in Gratitude, for a Compliance, that was Involuntary, and the Effect, rather, of Compaſſion, than of Love, He ſhould reſolve to ſupport himſelf under the Misfortune of her Averſion, without permitting his own Sentiments to be imbittered, by the Effects of it ; till, by a Progreſs of perſwaſive Softneſs, He ſhall have touched her reluctant Heart, and prepared it to receive Impreſſions, as well of *Love*, as of *Gratitude*.

BUT, how Monſtrous is the Brutal Figure, which I have ſeen ſome *Husbands* make! who, when *Lovers*, were the Pooreſt, and moſt Abject, of all *Slaves*! — When they ſhould be *Defenders*, they are *Tyrants* ; and when it was reaſonable for them to have been *Provoked*, they were *ſtupidly Submiſſive* ! — How contemptibly is their unmanly Weakneſs! A moroſe, and reſtleſs *Peeviſhneſs*, makes up the Behaviour they expect to *charm by* ! They contract a ſurly, ſower Habit, from the Diſappointments they meet in Life ; and, inſtead of ſoftening the Edge of Affliction, toward the Woman, who is bound to ſhare their Sufferings, they double them, on *her Head*, from whom, (in Honour, and Humanity) they ought to ward off Sorrow, by a noble Sweetneſs, and endearing Tenderneſs in their whole Behaviour !

BUT the pleaſanteſt Stupidity of all, is, That when, by a Length of Savage Cruelties, they have made themſelves compleatly Odious ; they are Impudent enough to *wonder, How it happens that their Wives appear no fonder of them ?*

THERE is no Part of our Life that requires a nicer Conduct, than our Choice of the Perſon, with whom we are to *vow an inſeperable Union* ; and, yet, there is Nothing, which we venture on, with more Raſhneſs ; or, which we examine, with ſo little Foreſight ! — And, hence it is, That *MATRIMONY*, with equal Satyr, and Juſtice, has been compared, by one of our Old Poets, To a *Crowd* in the *Street*, which excites a Curioſity, in every *Paſſer-by*, to add one Fool to the Number : But, they are no ſooner in the midſt of the Preſs, than they grow uneaſy at their Situation, and are as Eager to elbow out again, as they were, before, to gain Admiſſion.

Marriage *is like unto a* Rabble-Rout ;
They, that are Out, *would fain get* In ;
And They, that are In, *would fain get* Out.

MANY are the *Pleaſantries*, which the Truth, and Frequency, of this unlucky Obſervation, have given Occaſion to, among *Men of Wit* ; who, having laugh'd, a while, at Others, grow ſilly enough, themſelves, to be alſo laughed at, in their Turns; — But, in all the Multitude of Sarcaſtick Fancies, which I have met with, upon this *beaten* Subject, I remember none, that is ſo uncommon, and founded on ſo humorous a Piece of Extravagance, as an EPITAPH, which I ſaw, at *Rome* ; where a Man, and his Wife, who were buried, together, are repreſented quarrelling, in their Grave. — The Original is in *Latin*, but I will tranſlate it into *Engliſh*, for the Service of *Coquets*, and *Old Maids*, who cannot fail to make Good Uſe of it, on a THEME, which they delight in handling.

STAY, Batchelor ! *if you have Wit* !
A Wonder *to behold !*
Husband, *and* Wife, *in One dark Pit,*
Lye ſtill, and never Scold !

Tread ſoftly, though, — for Fear ſhe wakes :
Hark ! *She begins, already* !
You've hurt my Head, — My Shoulder akes. —
Theſe *Sots* can ne'er move *ſteddy*.

Ah, Friend, *with happy* Freedom *bleſt* !
See ! *how my Hope's miſcarried.*
Not DEATH it ſelf, *can give you* Reſt,
Unleſs you die, Unmarried.

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